



Cochise County Board of Supervisors

Public Programs... Personal Service
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August 12, 2014

Public Comments Processing
Attn: FWS-R2-ES-2013-0056
Division of Policy and Directives Management
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Headquarters, MS: BPHC
5275 Leesburg Pike
Falls Church, VA 22041-3803
Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>

Dan Ashe, Director
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
1849 C. Street, NW, ROOM 3331
Washington, DC 20240
Email: dan_ashe@fws.gov

RE: Request for Public Hearing and Comment Extension in Regard to FWS-R2-ES-2013-0056 Draft EIS (DEIS) for the Proposed Revision to the Nonessential Experimental Population of the Mexican Wolf (*Canis lupus bailey*)

Cochise County formally requests a public hearing be held within the County wherein USFWS presents facts and answers questions from the public and from County officials in regard to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Proposed Revision to the Nonessential Experimental Population of the Mexican Wolf. The County originally requested a public meeting be held in Cochise County in July 2013 (attached) and is dismayed to hear that the only public meetings will be held over 300 miles away. It is not practical for people in Cochise County to travel this far to a meeting, especially in light of the fact that they may only receive three minutes of time to present their issues. A meeting in the county would allow those from much of the area south of I-10 to have the opportunity to provide much needed public input.

The hearing needs to be held at least 60 days prior to the close of the comment period on the DEIS to allow adequate time for comments.

The reason for the hearing is the unique status of Cochise County in respect to current and proposed actions related to the Mexican wolf. Cochise County is the only county in Arizona that has wolves being introduced just south of its border, subjecting the County to wolf occupation with no NEPA analysis and no opportunity for comment. USFWS subversively provided the Mexican government with wolves to introduce as close as 30 miles south of our County line (DEIS Chapter 1, page 27).

Further, as noted in the DEIS in Chapter 1, page 27:

“Gray wolves are capable of dispersing > 500 miles (>800 km) (Fritts 1983, Boyd et al. 1995). The observed movement distance for dispersing wolves in the BRWRA population has 26 averaged 54 +/- 6 miles (87 km) (IFT 2005). Dispersal and natural re-colonization of areas of suitable habitat in Arizona and New Mexico south of I-10 to the international border with Mexico is possible both from the reintroduction areas in Mexico and, if we were to allow wolves to disperse into the MWEPA, 29 from the BRWRA.”

These Mexican wolves that come north from Old Mexico gain immediate full endangered species status once they cross into Cochise County. If the proposed action is implemented, additional wolves are expected to be planted in Cochise County. These wolves jeopardize the economic and social stability of the citizens of Cochise County and for this reason, we deserve to be heard and to ask questions.

The County also requests an extension of the comment period by an additional 120 days past the current September 23, 2014 due date. This extension is necessary for our citizens to become informed and to provide constructive comments to the USFWS proposed action.

Sincerely,

Patrick G. Call
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Ann English
Vice-Chairman
District 2

Richard R. Searle
Supervisor
District 3

cc:
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